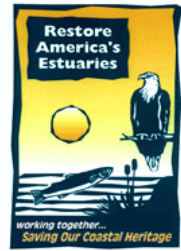


Announcing A National Partnership To Restore Our Nation's Estuaries



The NOAA Restoration Center's Community-Based Restoration Program and Restore America's Estuaries are announcing their **National Partnership to Restore Our Nation's Estuaries** consistent with both organizations' goals and objectives to maximize Federal, state and local resources and talents to restore one million acres of estuaries. This Partnership was announced at the May 16th celebration on Capitol Hill. During the event the two organizations committed \$1.1 million in the first year, which represents an exciting step towards forming such unique partnerships dedicated to habitat restoration. Community-based restoration projects were jointly funded in the following estuaries: Gulf of Maine, Narragansett Bay, Long Island Sound, Hudson-Raritan Estuary, Chesapeake Bay, Albermarle and Pamlico Sounds, Tampa Bay, Louisiana's Mississippi Delta, Galveston Bay, San Francisco Bay and Puget Sound.

The Restoration Center, contained within NOAA's Fishery Service, is home to the Community-Based Restoration Program (CRP). In 1996, the CRP began to inspire local efforts to conduct meaningful, on-the-ground restoration of marine, estuarine and riparian habitat. The Program provides seed money and technical expertise to address important fishery habitat concerns across coastal America by means of a grass-roots, bottom up approach. Projects are developed by individuals and civic organizations, and are successful because they have significant local support, including citizens' hands-on involvement to implement the restoration. NOAA solicits proposals for locally-driven habitat restoration projects, and works closely with communities to aid their development and implementation. Projects are subsequently monitored and maintained by communities, promoting stewardship and a heightened appreciation for their environment and its long-term health.

Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) is a leader in national efforts to protect, conserve and restore our Nation's estuaries. RAE's mission is to restore one million acres of estuary habitat. Since 1995, RAE has been working to preserve the nation's network of estuaries by protecting and restoring the lands and waters essential to the richness and diversity of life. RAE is a coalition of 11 of the Nation's most effective community-based conservation organizations that are working to protect and restore coastal estuaries. The RAE Coalition consists of: the American Littoral Society, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Conservation Law Foundation, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, Galveston Bay Foundation, North Carolina Coastal Federation, People for Puget Sound, Save The Bay, Narragansett Bay, Save San Francisco Bay Association, Save the Sound, and Tampa BayWatch.